

**BINDING CONSENT DECREE IMPOSED BY THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE  
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION AND ACCEPTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**I. BASIS FOR CONSENT DECREE**

On November 5, 2011, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (“NCAA” or the “Association”) learned of allegations of child sexual abuse occurring in the athletic facilities of The Pennsylvania State University (“University” or “Penn State”), perpetrated by former assistant football coach Gerald A. Sandusky (“Sandusky”). The University commissioned Freeh Sporkin & Sullivan, LLP (“FSS”), led by former FBI Director Louis Freeh, to investigate the alleged failure of University personnel to respond to and report Sandusky’s misconduct, and “[t]he circumstances under which such abuse could occur in University facilities or under the auspices of University programs for youth.”<sup>1</sup> On June 22, 2012, a Criminal Jury convicted Sandusky on 45 criminal counts related to 10 victims, including a 2001 incident that occurred in the University athletic showers and was witnessed by a then-graduate assistant. On July 12, 2012, FSS released its investigative report (the “Freeh Report”). The Freeh Report’s findings depict an environment shaped by the actions and inactions of members of the leadership and board of Penn State that allowed Sandusky’s serial child sexual abuse.

The NCAA recognizes that the circumstances involved in the Penn State matter are, in many respects, unlike any matter encountered by the NCAA in the past; it is doubtful, hopefully, that a similar circumstance would arise on any other campus in the future. In particular, the egregiousness of the predicate conduct is unprecedented, amounting to a failure of institutional and individual integrity far exceeding a lack of institutional control or individual unethical conduct. The University has undertaken a commendable process by commissioning the independent FSS investigation. FSS has established an exhaustive factual record compiled from, *inter alia*, more than 430 interviews and analysis of more than 3.5 million pieces of electronic data and documents.<sup>2</sup>

In light of this record and the University’s willingness, for purposes of this resolution, to accept the Freeh Report, which the University itself commissioned, traditional investigative and administrative proceedings would be duplicative and unnecessary. Rather, the existing record permits fashioning an appropriate remedy for the violations on an expedited timetable, which benefits current and future University students, faculty and staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Freeh Sporkin & Sullivan, LLP, Report of the Special Investigative Counsel Regarding the Actions of The Pennsylvania State University Related to the Child Sexual Abuse Committed by Gerald A. Sandusky, July 12, 2012, page 8, *available at* [http://www.thefreehreportonpsu.com/REPORT\\_FINAL\\_071212.pdf](http://www.thefreehreportonpsu.com/REPORT_FINAL_071212.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 9.

## II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In a November 17, 2011 letter from NCAA President Mark Emmert to University President Rodney Erickson, Dr. Emmert noted that the membership of the Association has made clear in its Constitution and Bylaws what is expected of member institutions, administrators and coaches. Penn State was asked to describe how the University and relevant personnel have met their obligations to the Association. Penn State has communicated to the NCAA that it accepts the findings of the Freeh Report for purposes of this resolution and acknowledges that those facts constitute violations of the Constitutional and Bylaw principles described in the letter. Penn State expressly agrees not to challenge the consent decree and waives any claim to further process, including, without limitation, any right to a determination of violations by the NCAA Committee on Infractions, any appeal under NCAA rules, and any judicial process related to the subject matter of this Consent Decree.

Therefore, without further investigation or response, the findings of the Criminal Jury and the Freeh Report establish a factual basis from which the NCAA concludes that Penn State breached the standards expected by and articulated in the NCAA Constitution and Bylaws.

1. A failure to value and uphold institutional integrity demonstrated by inadequate, and in some instances non-existent, controls and oversight surrounding the athletics program of the University, such as those controls prescribed by Articles 2.1, 6.01.1, and 6.4 of the NCAA Constitution.
2. A failure to maintain minimal standards of appropriate and responsible conduct. The NCAA seeks to foster an environment and culture of honesty, as exemplified by NCAA Bylaws 10.01.1 and 11.1.1, and by Bylaw 10.1 on ethical conduct. Indeed, NCAA Bylaw 10.1 enumerates a non-exhaustive list of examples of inappropriate conduct. In addition, Article 2.4 of the NCAA Constitution requires athletic programs to adhere to fundamental values of respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility.
3. A lack of adherence to fundamental notions of individual integrity. An institution's head coach should promote an atmosphere for compliance and monitor the activities of all assistant coaches and other administrators involved with the program who report directly or indirectly to the coach. Further, NCAA Bylaw 19.01.2, consistent with Article 2.4 of the NCAA Constitution, demands the employees associated with intercollegiate athletics to serve as positive moral models for students in order "for intercollegiate athletics to promote the character development of participants, to enhance the integrity of higher education and to promote civility in society."

The entirety of the factual findings in the Freeh Report supports these conclusions. A detailed recitation of the Freeh Report is not necessary, but these conclusions rely on the following key factual findings with respect to the University's oversight of its football program:

- [University] President Graham B. Spanier, Senior Vice President-Finance and Business Gary C. Shultz, Athletic Director Timothy M. Curley and Head Football Coach Joseph V. Paterno [] failed to protect against a child sexual predator harming children for over a decade. These men concealed Sandusky's activities from the Board of Trustees, the University community and authorities. . . .
- These individuals, unchecked by the Board of Trustees that did not perform its oversight duties, empowered Sandusky to attract potential victims to the campus and football events by allowing him to have continued, unrestricted and unsupervised access to the University's facilities and affiliation with the University's prominent football program. Indeed, that continued access provided Sandusky with the very currency that enabled him to attract his victims. Some coaches, administrators and football program staff members ignored the red flags of Sandusky's behaviors and no one warned the public about him.
- By not promptly and fully advising the Board of Trustees about the 1998 and 2001 child sexual abuse allegations against Sandusky and the subsequent Grand Jury investigation of him, Spanier failed in his duties as President. The Board also failed in its duties to oversee the President and senior University officials in 1998 and 2001 by not inquiring about important University matters and by not creating an environment where senior University officials felt accountable.<sup>3</sup>

FSS recognized that Spanier, Schultz, Paterno and Curley provided various explanations for their deficient conduct, but FSS found that it was

- more reasonable to conclude that, in order to avoid the consequences of bad publicity, the most powerful leaders at the University – Spanier, Schultz, Paterno and Curley – repeatedly concealed critical facts relating to Sandusky's child abuse from the authorities, the University's Board of Trustees, the Penn State community and the public at large.<sup>4</sup>

Although FSS concluded that avoiding the consequences of bad publicity was the most significant cause for the University's failure to protect child victims and report to authorities, FSS further concluded it was not the only cause. FSS also noted, among other causes, that

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 15-16.

- the President “discouraged discussion and dissent”;
- Spanier, Schultz, Paterno, and Curley allowed Sandusky to retire as a valued member of the University’s football legacy, with “ways ‘to continue to work with young people through Penn State,’ essentially granting him license to bring boys to campus facilities for ‘grooming’ as targets for his assaults”;
- the football program “did not fully participate in, or opted out, of some University programs, including Clery Act compliance. . . .”; and
- the University maintained a “culture of reverence for the football program that is ingrained at all levels of the campus community.”<sup>5</sup>

### III. SANCTIONS

The NCAA concludes that this evidence presents an unprecedented failure of institutional integrity leading to a culture in which a football program was held in higher esteem than the values of the institution, the values of the NCAA, the values of higher education, and most disturbingly the values of human decency. The sexual abuse of children on a university campus by a former university official – and even the active concealment of that abuse – while despicable, ordinarily would not be actionable by the NCAA. Yet, in this instance, it was the fear of or deference to the omnipotent football program that enabled a sexual predator to attract and abuse his victims. Indeed, the reverence for Penn State football permeated every level of the University community. That imbalance of power and its result are antithetical to the model of intercollegiate athletics embedded in higher education. Indeed, the culture exhibited at Penn State is an extraordinary affront to the values all members of the Association have pledged to uphold and calls for extraordinary action.

As a result, the NCAA has determined that the University’s sanctions be designed to not only penalize the University for contravention of the NCAA Constitution and Bylaws, but also to change the culture that allowed this activity to occur and realign it in a sustainable fashion with the expected norms and values of intercollegiate athletics. Moreover, the NCAA recognizes that in this instance no student-athlete is responsible for these events and, therefore, the NCAA has fashioned its sanctions in consideration of the potential impact on all student-athletes. To wit, after serious consideration and significant discussion, the NCAA has determined not to impose the so-called “death penalty.” While these circumstances certainly are severe, the suspension of competition is most warranted when the institution is a repeat violator and has failed to cooperate or take corrective action. The University has never before had NCAA major violations, accepted these penalties and corrective actions, has removed all of the individual offenders identified by FSS from their past senior leadership roles, has itself commissioned the FSS investigation and provided unprecedented access and openness, in some instances, even agreed to waive attorney-client privilege, and already has implemented many corrective actions. Acknowledging these and other factors, the NCAA does not deem the so-called “death penalty” to be appropriate.

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 16-17.

In light of the foregoing, the NCAA imposes the following sanctions on the University:

**A. Punitive Component**

- **\$60 million fine.** The NCAA imposes a \$60 million fine, equivalent to the approximate average of one year's gross revenue from the Penn State football program, to be paid over a five-year period beginning in 2012 into an endowment for programs preventing child sexual abuse and/or assisting the victims of child sexual abuse. The minimum annual payment will be \$12 million until the \$60 million is paid. The proceeds of this fine may not be used to fund programs at the University. No current sponsored athletic team may be reduced or eliminated in order to fund this fine.
- **Four-year postseason ban.** The NCAA imposes a four-year ban on participation in postseason play in the sport of football, beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year and expiring at the conclusion of the 2015-2016 academic year. Therefore, the University's football team shall end its 2012 season and each season through 2015 with the playing of its last regularly scheduled, in-season contest and shall not be eligible to participate in any postseason competition, including a conference championship, any bowl game, or any post-season playoff competition.
- **Four-year reduction of grants-in-aid.** For a period of four years commencing with the 2013-2014 academic year and expiring at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 academic year, the NCAA imposes a limit of 15 initial grants-in-aid (from a maximum of twenty-five allowed) and for a period of four years commencing with the 2014-2015 academic year and expiring at the conclusion of the 2017-2018 academic year a limit of 65 total grants-in-aid (from a maximum of 85 allowed) for football during each of those specified years. In the event the number of total grants-in-aid drops below 65, the University may award grants-in-aid to non-scholarship student-athletes who have been members of the football program as allowed under Bylaw 15.5.6.3.6.
- **Five years of probation.** The NCAA imposes this period of probation, which will include the appointment of an on-campus, independent Integrity Monitor and periodic reporting as detailed in the Corrective Component of this Consent Decree. Failure to comply with the Consent Decree during this probationary period may result in additional, more severe sanctions.
- **Vacation of wins since 1998.** The NCAA vacates all wins of the Penn State football team from 1998 to 2011. The career record of Coach "Joe" Paterno will reflect the vacated records.

- **Waiver of transfer rules and grant-in-aid retention.** Any entering or returning football student-athlete will be allowed to immediately transfer and will be eligible to immediately compete at the transfer institution, provided he is otherwise eligible. Any football student-athlete who wants to remain at the University may retain his athletic grant-in-aid, as long as he meets and maintains applicable academic requirements, regardless of whether he competes on the football team.
- **Individual penalties to be determined.** The NCAA reserves the right to initiate a formal investigatory and disciplinary process and impose sanctions on individuals after the conclusion of any criminal proceedings related to any individual involved.

## **B. Corrective Component**

- **Adoption of all recommendations presented in Chapter 10 of the Freeh Report.** The NCAA requires the University to adopt all recommendations for reform delineated in Chapter 10 of the Freeh Report. The University shall take all reasonable steps to implement the recommendations in spirit and substance by December 31, 2013.
- **Implementation of Athletics Integrity Agreement.** The Freeh Report includes a number of recommendations related to the University's Athletic Department. Specifically, in Chapter 10, Section 5.0, the Report addresses the integration of the Athletic Department into the greater University community. Within 10 days of this Consent Decree, the University will be required to enter into an "Athletics Integrity Agreement" ("AIA") with the NCAA and the Big Ten Conference, which obligates the University to adopt all of the recommendations in Section 5.0 of the Freeh Report as described in the above paragraph and, at a minimum, the following additional actions:
  - **Compliance Officer for Athletics.** Establish and select an individual for a position of a compliance officer or equivalent who is, at a minimum, responsible for the ethical and compliance obligations of the Athletic Department.
  - **Compliance Council.** Create a Compliance Council (or Council Subcommittee) composed of faculty, senior University administrators, and the compliance officer for athletics, which shall be responsible for review and oversight of matters related to ethical, legal and compliance obligations of the Athletic Department.

- Disclosure Program. Create a reporting mechanism, including a hotline, for named or anonymous individuals to disclose, report, or request advice on any identified issues or questions regarding compliance with (i) the AIA; (ii) the Athletic Department's policies, conduct, practices, or procedures, or (iii) the NCAA Constitution, Bylaws, or the principals regarding institutional control, responsibility, ethical conduct, and integrity reflected in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- Internal Accountability and Certifications. Appoint a named coach, manager, or administrator for each of the University's NCAA-sanctioned intercollegiate athletic teams who shall be assigned to monitor and oversee activities within his or her team and shall annually certify to the Compliance Council that his or her team is compliant with all relevant ethical, legal, compliance and University standards and obligations.
- External Compliance Review/Certification Process. The Athletic Director shall annually certify to the Compliance Council, the Board of Trustees, and the NCAA that the Athletic Department is in compliance with all ethical, compliance, legal and University obligations. If the Department fails to earn a certification, the Board of Trustees (or subcommittee thereof) or an appropriate University administrator shall take appropriate action against the Athletic Department, including the possibility of reduction in athletic funding.
- Athletics Code of Conduct. Create or update any code of conduct of the Athletic Department to codify the values of honesty, integrity and civility.
- Training and Education. In addition to Chapter 10, Section 5.5 of the Freeh Report, require all student-athletes and University employees associated with the Athletic Department, including faculty and staff to complete a yearly training course that addresses issues of ethics, integrity, civility, standards of conduct and reporting of violations. Each person who is required to complete training shall certify, in writing, that he or she has received such training. All training shall be overseen by the Compliance Council. The Board of Trustees also should receive training and education on these issues, including its relationship, role and responsibilities regarding the athletics program.
- If the NCAA determines, in its sole discretion, that the University materially breached any provision of the AIA, such action shall be considered grounds for extending the term of the AIA or imposing additional sanctions, up to and including, a temporary ban on participation in certain intercollegiate athletic competition and additional fines. The NCAA shall be permitted to accept as true and take into consideration all factual findings of the Freeh Report in imposing additional sanctions related to breach of the AIA and may initiate further NCAA investigative and administrative proceedings. The NCAA will provide the University notice of the allegation of a material breach and an opportunity to

respond, but the final determination rests with the NCAA.

- **Appointment of an independent Athletics Integrity Monitor for a five-year period.** The NCAA requires that the University appoint an independent Athletics Integrity Monitor (the “Monitor”) for a five-year period, at the University’s expense. The Monitor will prepare a quarterly report to the University’s Board of Trustees, the Big Ten Conference, and the NCAA regarding the University’s execution and maintenance of the provisions of the AIA. The Monitor will make recommendations to the University to take any steps he or she reasonably believes are necessary to comply with the terms of the AIA and to enhance compliance with NCAA rules and regulations. The Monitor will operate under the following conditions:
  - He or she will be selected by the NCAA, in consultation with the University and the Big Ten Conference.
  - He or she will have access to any University facilities, personnel and non-privileged documents and records as are reasonably necessary to assist in the execution of his or her duties. The University shall preserve all such records as directed by the Monitor.
  - He or she will have the authority to employ legal counsel, consultants, investigators, experts and other personnel reasonably necessary to assist in the proper discharge of his or her duties. His or her expenses will be paid by the University, and the University shall indemnify and hold harmless the Monitor and his or her professional advisors from any claim by any third party except for conduct: a) outside the scope of the Monitor’s duties; b) undertaken in bad faith; or c) constituting gross negligence or willful misconduct.

This Consent Decree may be modified or clarified by mutual written consent of the parties.



By signature of its President below, the University represents (i) that it has taken all actions necessary, to execute and perform this Consent Decree and the AIA and will take all actions necessary to perform all actions specified under this Consent Decree and the AIA in accordance with the terms hereof and thereof; (ii) its entry into this Consent Decree and the AIA is consistent with, and allowed by, the laws of Pennsylvania and any other applicable law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Consent Decree has been signed by or on behalf of each of the parties as of July 23, 2012.



Rodney A. Erickson, President  
The Pennsylvania State University



Mark A. Emmert, President  
National Collegiate Athletic Association